Persell Middle School Meeting

June 13, 2013

Jennifer Moon Ro, Kathleen Magiera, Jason Kathman (15 yrs), Jeff Kresge (18 yrs) Paul Benson

Kathman: <http://www.jamestownpublicschools.org/persell/faculty/jkresge/Site/Kathman.html>

Kresge: <http://www.jamestownpublicschools.org/persell/faculty/jkresge/Site/Welcome.html>

Notes:

* Introductions: Ray Fashano rebuild district facilities adding significant tech upgrades, every teacher got a laptop and smart classroom; and Ray Monahan was his IT developer, past Apple rep.
* 7th and 8th grade history; State exam for the content is coming.
* Kathman: Apple Distinguished Educator Institute for a week in Orlando (twice).
* WSTCSS Kresge as first president and Jason as Pres. of the Western door.
* TAH: [www.tdhah.com](http://www.tdhah.com)
* Social studies standards and now the common core standards are being rolled out. Are they tied together with ELA?
* Kathman: modules being implemented in ELA are problematic because the ELA texts do not line up chronologically with U.S. History content.
* SED is not looking curriculum wide. SS and ELA are not aligned. SS doing American Revolution and the point where the ELA folks are teaching a Civil War novel.
* Best intentions are there, but their not talking to each other to correlate curriculums.
* Some instructors ignore some adapt. KM
* Is there enough literature to align the curriculum?: JMR
  + Kathman: primary sources is tough for 7th graders, but there are plenty of secondary texts.
  + Kresge: 8th is easier because the vernacular is 1700’s for 7th grade time period: Constitution, Uncle Tom’s Cabin. 8th graders the primary sources are in 20th Century vernacular.
* KM: To proceed we will conduct interviews, writing together, collaboration, we will write about it as a demonstration of the back and forth dialogue.
  + Learning the technology
  + Special Ed piece: keep them engaged, vocab, etc.
  + How do you do that?
* Kathman: next year he will teach the same grade level as Kresge. For the first time in 15 years will be teaching the same year at the same time. Will share tech and the large multiclass group that can communicate across blogs, and can be graded together.
* Changing the middle school team model to Professional Learning Communities where all social studies teachers line up and work together. Good and bad: no longer teamed with science and math on teamwork together. Be more content driven.
* Kresge: Previously each team had 90 students: each team had an advanced math and science classes. Creates a hierarchy where all the top kids are in those two classes, while SS and ELA got all the bottom kids. They were hierarchically homogeneously grouping the kids. Middle level math science kids were not challenged by the other kids in their class because they are in class with middle and lower students. Next year under the new system, these groups will allow them to raise the bar for the smarter SS kids [more clarification here].
* Kresge’s a storyteller, Kathman uses collaborative learning: Next year, if one student is not learning or is not doing well under one technique/practice, they can swap kids.
* JKs: They are always pushing the edge and never get good at anything. “Constant stream of mediocrity”. Smiles.
* Kathleen: Wants to know *why* what they do works?
* JMR: Common Core, ELA; there is a need to build modules that use tech to use all the . . . Text Complicity: what did Heather (math teacher at Persell) do? “Close Reads” Heather reads first doing academic vocabulary then she does “chunking” with kids to have them responsible for certain sections. Sometimes she rewrites the material to make it more readable.
* Kathman: Co-Teaches with Heather at the end of the day. AT (?) students and Special Ed team differentiation. In practice, mixing all kids is to the detriment of the smart students. Run two separate lessons in the class to meet the needs of all the students there.
* Kresge: collaboration with Kathleen and Jennifer will be productive because they have not been trained in teaching special ed.; they can calibrate their classrooms to be more Common Core (CC) savvy and to use more Special Education techniques to bring the CC principles being taught together.
* KM: knows Special Ed but not the tech side. Nice collaboration. Thursday is her research day and could observe and be available. How she likes to commit to a school district. Really like MS as a place for studying collaboration.
* Facilitate the Thursdays through Principal Phil Camarata. KM studies co-teaching, now CC.
* Kresge: what is CC? Money’s here but we don’t know what the core is. [GST BOCES person].
* Kathman: test is critical. 3 day long test for a 13 year old is difficult. 13 year olds in a chair for three straight days and then a week off and its math for three more days. No better way to make them miserable.
* Kresge: MS kids have an attention span of 15-20 minutes, so now we have them sit for an 1.5 hour test.
* Kathman: 3 hours is opposite of how they naturally behave. Fairly difficult to heavy reading.
* The security on the test was nuts. Couldn’t see the test until the day of. 20% of teacher’s score is on the test they can’t see.
* Kathman: three people left teaching from this building alone. They *quit* teaching because of these changes.
* KM: Ed TPS test. Pearson evaluates student teaching via video ($300) Pre and Post video that schools must agree to. It’s their APPR for SUNY Fredonia education students that reflects on professors.
* Kathman: Louisiana teachers are reported on by the colleges as to where they studied.
* KM: Tracking data on teachers is tough. The state wants to close down ineffective teacher prep programs.
* APPR documentation is a folder on materials over the course of the year. [Mike Mac] There will be multiple changes in the APPR methodology over time.
* KM would like to write with you. Good for all concerned and the field.
  + Jamestown PD days
  + They would do the writing and they add their pieces when required for input.
  + Tech with CC
  + Literacy research and implementation
  + Blogging research on UGs and MA
  + Digital storytelling: video taping: Rich Colosi and elementary students and has a web site to include. <http://richardcolosi.brandyourself.com/>
* Kresge: Kids shutting down after the big exams. The lesson we’ll see today is students teaching to themselves (with Jamie Genco) on Reconstruction. Created a script on 16 pictures that had nothing to do with Reconstruction. They’ll be online through Jeff’s website. <http://www.jamestownpublicschools.org/persell/faculty/jkresge/Site/ReconFilms.html>
* Kathman: Situation where kids are writing and other kids are commenting on their writing from another school. Their students at Fredonia State or any other middle school. Point is communicating with peers upgrades their performance levels.
* Kresge: kids love to have other people critique and respond to their writing.
* Work with Dunkirk (Ryan Corbett), Lancaster (Vince Lotempio, Seamus McCarville (?) and Big Dumb Animal), Horseheads (Jason Schrage, Brandon Johnson), Springfield-Griffin (Drew Beiter).
* Time Constraints because of the pace of the curriculum maps.
* KM: teaching at a higher content level, can students keep up?
* The JKs kindergartners have homework every day.
* Levels vary for kids. Tech will help teachers to create lots of assignments for everything we do and meet kids at their differentiated way of learning: drawing, reading, writing, etc.
* Kresge: MS kids are at different levels. More abstract thinkers, next year kids can take more time, up to a week to do an assignment and use an assignment that fits where they are. Lots of planning. Website iTunes U with say a lesson on the UN with 4 different levels, 4 different ways of learning, a multitude of methods to learn the same thing.
* Grant: stuff: computers,
* Kresge: KM and JMR can address their weaknesses in curriculum. Evidence-based teaching.
* Their lesson plans are on line at the Persell site (see above). Principal like detailed lesson plans. For every lesson in every class. “When you plan well you teach well.” Okay with it, it’s just daunting. CC will now change everything.
* Differentiation with Technology. Writing. Evidence based practices. Best practices.

Kresge Lesson: Self-taught lesson

* Student explains the lesson. Reconstruction after the Civil War on rebuilding South through mistrust and various plans to do it . . .
* Packet: why the south was destroyed, physically and mentally. Data
* Teacher created and taught the class
* Studied the materials, then got 16 pictures, and they created a video. The pictures intentionally *had nothing to with Reconstruction*.
* Script had to be full of similes, metaphors and allegories.
* “All going to be in different places and this is fine.”
* Will film as their scripts are finished.
* Can use the iPads to view the images or hard copy.